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# Press Release

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## **ARBO RELEASES UPDATE STUDY OF COMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH INVALID CONTACT LENS PRESCRIPTIONS**

### ***Results Indicate The Need For Further Documentation***

The Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) has released updated results of its initiative to document complications caused by contact lenses dispensed without a valid prescription.

The following is a brief summary of the 196 reports received since January 2003 and is listed by categories. Responses are expressed in percentages of total respondents. A more detailed summary of results is attached to this release.

### Signs and Symptoms Experienced By Patients:

The most reported sign or symptom was stinging (41%), followed by corneal edema (38%), neovascularization/pannus (36%), pain (36%), burning (35%), and foreign body sensation (34%). Others were corneal epithelial defect (33%), conjunctivitis (28%), ocular inflammation (27%), corneal infiltrate (26%), corneal distortion (23%), keratitis (22%), corneal ulcer (19%), dry eye (18%), other (18%), giant papillary conjunctivitis (GPC) (18%), itching (14%), discharge (13%), corneal opacity (10%), blurred vision (6%), and iritis (1%).

### Treatment Plans Used to Respond to Signs and Symptoms:

The most common treatment plan included the prescription of topical antibacterial/anti-inflammatory medications (44%), followed by lubricants (33%), topical and oral antibacterial medications (26%), other treatment plan (15%), refit contact lenses (9%), and the decrease or discontinuation of contact lens wear (6%).

### Patient Outcomes:

The most common outcome was long term but not permanent vision loss (19%), followed by other outcomes (15%) return to pre-incident status (14%), permanent vision loss (7%), permanent scarring (4%) and penetrating keratoplasty (1%).

### Financial Impact of Complications:

- The patient paid an average of \$75.35 out of pocket expense per incident.
- Third party payers paid an average of \$135.66 per incident.
- The patient loss of income averaged \$30.03 per incident.
- The average total cost per incident was \$241.04.

The actual documentation of patient complications is conducted by the eye care professionals completing the Contact Lens Complications Form provided through ARBO. The eye care professional fills out a form for each incident of a patient who obtained contact lenses without a valid prescription and returns the form to ARBO via fax or e-mail. ARBO compiles the information for this ongoing study. ARBO will periodically updates its Summary of Results by providing information to eye


care professionals, state attorneys general, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) through the ARBO web site and articles in professional and trade journals.

Eye care professionals can download the Contact Lens Complications Form from the ARBO web site at [www.arbo.org](http://www.arbo.org). The forms can also be requested by contacting ARBO at (314) 785-6000, FAX (314) 785-6002; e-mail at [\[url\]arbo@arbo.org\[url\]](mailto:[url]arbo@arbo.org[url]).

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### **Summary of Results:**

A total of 196 reports were received in the years of 2003 and 2004. A summary of the signs/symptoms, treatment plans, outcome, and financial impact of the 196 reports is as follows:

Stinging (79 of 196) was the most reported sign/symptom, followed by corneal edema (73), neovascularization/pannus (70), pain (69), burning (67) and foreign body sensation (66). Others were corneal epithelial defect (64), conjunctivitis (54), ocular inflammation (52), corneal infiltrate (50), corneal distortion (44), keratitis (43), corneal ulcer (36), dry eye (35), other (35), giant papillary conjunctivitis (34), itching (27), discharge (25), corneal opacity , blurred vision (10), and iritis (2). The most common of the treatment plans was antibacterial/anti-inflammatory topical/oral (86), followed by lubricants (64), antibacterial topical/oral (51), other treatment plan (30), refit into correct contact lenses (17), decrease/discontinue contact lens wear (10), and surgical intervention (3).

Long term but not permanent vision loss (37) was the most common outcome reported, followed by other outcome (29), return to pre-incident status (27), permanent vision loss (12), permanent scarring (7), and penetrating keratoplasty (2).

Financial impact was divided into the categories of: medical costs out of pocket, medical costs by third party payer, loss of income/total or partial disability/etc, and sick days lost. A total of \$14,768.64 was reported to have been spent out of pocket; an average of \$75.35 per report. Third party payers paid a total of \$26,588.69; an average of \$135.66 per report. A total loss of income of \$5,886.00 was reported; an average of \$30.03 per report. A total of 29 sick days were reported.

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